YOUR TICKET TO A WORLD

FREE OF CHARGE

Issue #5 – March 2025

THE COUNTERFORCE

hardcore punk underground

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INTERVIEWS WITH JETSAM, PORTAL TOMB, DUREX AND WARGASM RECORDS (ISTANBUL) PEACE OF MIND (NYC) ROUNDUP • REVIEWS

What is this? **The Counterforce** is an initiative to push back against the corporate capture of hardcore punk. Social media apps and streaming platforms dominate how we interact online, including how we share and distribute our music and ideas. The corporations that run these platforms extract massive profits from us, which they use to fund and facilitate exploitation, war, and genocide. Meanwhile, our independent and underground alternatives have eroded.

The goal of The Counterforce is to strengthen and grow the hardcore punk underground that still exists outside of this corporate capture. Rather than funnel punk into profit-driven walled gardens, we want to foment and encourage a culture that is autonomous and independent. This is not just a nostalgic, backward-facing project—we want to explore new alternatives for spreading hardcore punk online and offline.

You are reading issue #5 of the print version of The Counterforce.

Find the files to print and distribute this zine (and others like it) yourself online at **https://the-counterforce.org**

There, you will also find the other arms of The Counterforce:

A WEB ZINE

This site publishes reviews, letters, scene reports, profiles/interviews, rants, and how-to guides, all with an emphasis on projects that try to exist outside of corporate platforms.

In part, we hope this will encourage human-driven curation, recommendation, and discovery. Find out about new bands that aren't on the streaming sites. Submit a review of your own band. Compile a scene report or show review and send it in. We also publish articles and DIY how-to guides to help empower other punks to build and participate in a scene that's less centered around evil apps.

All this is published online, but also compiled into regular print zine editions to bring paper back to the punk show (like the version you are reading now).

A DIRECTORY OF SIMILARLY ALIGNED PROJECTS

The Internet is breaking down. Websites outside of a handful of apps have slowly disappeared, and the ones that are still out there are harder and harder to find.

The Counterforce provides a directory of these websites: blogs, archives, distros, zines, radio shows and podcasts... anywhere hardcore punk can be found online (and maybe offline too!).

A PLACE TO EXPERIMENT WITH AND LEARN ABOUT ALTERNATIVES

It's easy to shit on the corporate social media and streaming platforms, but what other options are there? There are alternatives and we try them out—public online show calendars, open-source social media, self-hosted music sharing—and encourage other punks to join us.

THE COUNTERFORCE IS A DISTRIBUTED AND COMMUNITY PROJECT

Find everything online at: the-counterforce.org

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CANADA

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PRINT THIS ZINE

This zine is available on our website as a PDF you can print out and distribute yourself, with more coming soon.

DISPUTA – Maldito Sistema Demo Tape

Fast-paced hardcore with shouted-spanish vocals. The guitar breaks out into solos (or guitar leads) pretty frequently, which is not my favorite thing in hardcore punk, but DISPUTA doesn't lose me completely. A solid demo.

NO KNOCK – Imagine A World Without Landlord$ 7" EP

It opens with a deranged wail as the band launches into a non-stop straight ahead hardcore punk barrage of songs. It really just doesn't stop. I imagine the vocalist is writhing or rolling around for most of the set. The 7" inch jacket art is Willow's intricate pen drawings and the insert is a huge silkscreened newsprint poster that barely fits in the record sleeve once it's folded up. The insert is full of words, quotes, political statements, the words "No Knock"repeated endlessly, but I'm not sure if the lyrics are in there, which is too bad cause I know this band got something political and sharp to say! But you can tell just from the package and the energy.

PEACE OF MIND IN A TROUBLED WORLD vol. 1 — NYC 2024 Compilation

A 21-track comp tape featuring new tracks from 18 artists (a few bands on the PoM roster get 2 tracks). I believe many tracks are or were unreleased when this tape came out, including "SSRI" from FLOWER and "Bountiful Meal" from LOVE AND COMPASSION. Other bands on Peace Of Mind include NO KNOCK, DISPUTA, STATE MANUFACTURED TERROR, and MMI.

Other NYC staples on this tape include D4MT bands STRAW MAN ARMY & KALEIDOSCOPE, HEADSPLITTERS, ABISM, HYSTERIC POLEMIX and T.A.Z. Side A whips through these bands, with a consistent tracklist of high-energy hardcore punk and crust. Queer sludgelords GROKE make a return to close out side A, followed by a somewhat indulgent and long MANY MANY GIRLS noise/radiosurfing exploration.

Side B has fewer tracks with more space for crust (and jazz?), LOVE AND COMPASSION deliver a crushing crustcore track with crust two-step parts and then a spin-kickable breakdown. FLOWER's new track is somehow crusty and bounce/noodely without veering

into metalpunk (thumbs up). Then there's a STRAW MAN ARMY track off their new LP which segues the listener into the closing lengthy jazz interpretation of the classic "You Don't Have To Fuck People Over To Survive" print accompanied by spoken word from radical weirdo propagandist legend Seth Tobocman. It's a perfect journey.

The tape is accompanied by a full zine, with a lyric page for each song contributed by the respective band and full-colour cover art. Every band delivered 100% on their lyric page. I don't think even a pirated copy of photoshop touched this.

Overall, the gold standard for a punk comp tape. A collective effort from a scene to really bring together many different voices and bands and give outsiders a peek into what's going on in the city. The spirit of resistance as expressed in a wide variety of underground music is represented here and it's all "real". No posers and no cash-grabs. The real music of resistance. This comp will definitely be a beloved time capsule of this period of the NYC scene in the future.

You can get all info on Peace of Mind activities from their website: https://peaceofmindina-troubledworld.nyc and listen to their releases on their YouTube channel.

—Martin Force

A DIGITAL ZINE DISTRO

Major punk fanzines of the past fell victim to the rising costs of printing and shipping. We publish printable PDFs of our zines online for anyone to print and distribute themselves, and encourage other zinesters to submit their own.

What if instead of shipping zines around the world, any punk anywhere could log on, download some PDFs and scam some copies to have a fully stocked, PWYC zine distro at the next show? Print-It-Yourself!

A HARD LINE AGAINST CONTRIBUTING TO FURTHER CORPORATE CAPTURE OF OUR SUBCULTURE

– No links to Instagram, Spotify, Linktree, Discord, or other corporate platforms.
– No coverage of releases that are on major labels, or only available digitally on corporate streaming platforms.
– Always independent and not-for-profit.

For expanding the hardcore punk mutual aid autonomous zone.
For facilitating human curation and recommendation.
For hardcore punk with context and politics.

Against celebrity, ladder climbers, clout chasers and influencers.
Against the algorithmic flattening of our subculture.
Against the capitalist death machine and the corporate capture of hardcore punk.

Contributors to this issue: Corn, Crash JT, Ghas attack, Greg the Builder, Martin Force, Misery, Nab, Ralph Rivera, Slim and Vanislejay. Cover art by Ghas. Back cover: RIP Murphy Hoopes. Layout by Taylor Joy.

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Corn's Corner:

DEMO DUMPSTER DIVE #1

I think a lot about the way things get lost: band shirts that evaporate, ignored buildings demolished after you leave the neighbourhood, faint acquaintances delete their social media and you never see them again, digitally or otherwise. Almost all punk demos are like this: tossed off to niche audiences in limited quantities, uploaded to incredibly fragile file sharing sites, and usually eventually abandoned for lack of interest by either the band, the audience or both.

This article lines up roughly with issue #500 of Maximum RocknRoll, so I'm going back into that musty pile of greying newsprint I've been lugging from apartment to apartment, finding some gems of yore (i.e. 2011) and re-reviewing them here on the 'Force. Fans of 2010 laptop mic recordings, bitloss, and the smallest JPEGs imaginable won't wanna miss this.

FUSS – Cold Porn (Greensboro, NC)

"...VOID influenced stuff that seems so popular with all the troubled teens these days." – Aaron

Real deal teenagers in a basement shit, spazzy and straight ahead. I love the terrible album art and heart on sleeve lyrics, not a huge fan of the nonsensical and offensive Vietnam War sample, but such was the time. The EP they recorded a year later is the real treat I'd say.

THE FUCKING COPS – You Have The Right to Shut the Fuck Up (Cleveland, OH)

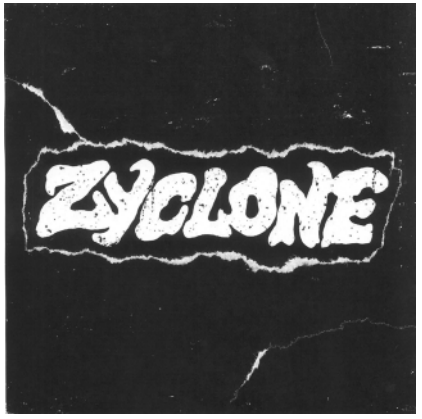
"A bit too much harmonization for my taste, but if they keep the guitar leads going everything should be OK." – Brad

Felt my JAWBREAKER tattoo tingle for this one, deep in the paint "orgcore" shit, the all-dressed hot dog on this tape: tired after work song, political song, song about a city, song about a girl. Pretty perfect.

RAGRAGE / TWAT SAUCE – Discography / Clash of the Tight Ones (Chattanooga, TN)

"So apparently there's this new thing called 'crust pop'..." – Kevin

Not a split, but might as well be, seems like they shared members and sent their demos in the same month. Somebody with more skin in the game should write about the Chattanooga / sloppy gay punk scene flowing out of this era, but I think part of the special thing about it that it never coalesced under a genre tag or something easily apeable (crust pop is pretty good though), and so remained specific to a small group of punks, a time and a couple places. Still, these songs all sound like being drunk in the summer and I love it.



Sometimes, you just crave the proficiency that a band like ZYCLONE brings.

From the opening seconds, Visions of Impending Death hits with pummeling intensity. The drumming, bass and guitar playing are absolutely insane-blisteringly fast while also being technically sound. The growling vocals carry a nihilistic flavor both sonically and lyrically that are drenched in just the right amount of reverb. This is especially evident in tracks like "Exterminate Them All." My favorite track, though, has to be the title track with its combination of one-two beats with abrupt shifting riffs. The track's ending lyric—"Reality is constant death"— encapsulates the war-torn capitalist machine we're all entrapped in.

One thing unique about ZYCLONE is their geographical makeup: the band draws members from Mexico, New Orleans, Austin, and Philadelphia. My interest always gets piqued when hearing about cross-location bands like this, as it brings diverse influences and perspectives. Alongside their varied geographic makeup, the band's members also come from an array of former and current projects, such as GUERRA FINAL, ELÉCTRIKA, and PSYCH-WAR. While no level of nepotism or seniority should qualify a band's value, ZYCLONE blends character from each of these other bands in a way that makes me appreciate them even more.

Maybe I'm over-reading the impact of former bands and geographic locations...but then again, maybe I'm not! Anyways, none of that actually matters that much because, all in all, Visions of Impending Death is just a good-ass punk demo.

Listen here: https://zyclone.bandcamp.com/album/visions-of-impending-death

—Crash JT

PEACE OF MIND ROUNDUP

Recently I was in NYC and stopped by Peace Of Mind HQ where I was gifted a few of their recent releases. Willow filled my bag with copies to take home, exclaiming "we don't care about making money, we just want to put our friends bands and get their music out there." Besides the LOVE AND COMPASSION tape, everything I was given has not yet been reviewed here. So, I present a roundup review:

MMI – Imminently Perilous To Life Demo Tape

As of writing, the newest Peace Of Mind release. Opens with a sample of Brett Spiner's alien-possessed character from Independence day whispering "PEACE? NO PEACE." —I'm sold. MMI plays dark crusty lofi hardcore and the vocals are really the stand-out: disturbingly guttural raw possessed demon vocals completely full of rage, they just cut through the recording. The riffs are dark and at times downright atmospheric. It's a good soundtrack for this particularly bleak winter. They also break out into the "dum-dum breakdown beat" (you'll know what I mean when you hear it). I don't know anything about this band besides being given the tape, but I really hope I get to see them.

sweaty energy of an overcapacity basement gig. Expect squealing feedback, tight but explosive drumming and the ideal medium dog bark vocals. A collaborative project between local legends of Montreal QC and Charlottetown PEI, we can only hope these hooligans have more tracks in the works to keep us hanging on to the edge of the pit waiting to grab the nearest bud and shake 'em from side to side. My only complaint here is the lack of lyrics on the Bandcamp (I will forever hound every band for this... it's so easy and people like me love to read 'em!!)

POISON SPEAR are making a rare appearance at the annual *La Chaîne* new band show in Montreal and rumour has it there may even be a cassette in the works for the true poison-heads.

Give it a spin here: https://poisonspear514.bandcamp.com/album/institutional-trust

—Misery

WARBITCH – Summoned

Hailing from the gloomy western lowlands of Glasgow, WARBITCH brings us just over 15 minutes of metal punk chaos. Clear and concise gravely vocals bludgeon us with adages of nuclear fallout, the horrors of war, and the eternal wheels of oppression grinding our bones. WARBITCH takes the blistering attitudes of "war bad" raw punk and brings an element of metal that will likely keep the HM-2 distortion fans happy. There's even a breakdown midway through "radiation zombie" that adds a bit of tempo variation spice to the fast-paced majority of these tracks. While the trashy cymbal choices don't always land for me with their constant crashing, overall the

need for speed makes me feel like crushing a soda can in my fist and head banging 'til my neck is sore. Plus it's not all apocalyptic doom and gloom—my favourite track of the release "fight back" is a rally cry to battle the oppressive restraints of the rising fascist governments world wide, reminding us that the struggle is constant and ever-changing, but always worth fighting for. Bonus points for the drawing of the ghoulish crust warrior who's absolutely selling their soul for shitty beer and a DISCHARGE bootleg on the artwork.

Give it a listen: https://warbitch.bandcamp.com/album/summoned

—Misery

ZYCLONE – Visions of Impending Death

Over the past year or so, I've taken an unprecedented hiatus from punk. Sure, I've had my occasional months-long breaks, but this one has dragged on longer than I'd like to admit. Thankfully, ZYCLONE, is the band that's finally breaking my silence.

Visions of Impending Death marks ZYCLONE's debut self-release. Clocking in at under 7 minutes, the demo is a surge of aggression, holding a sense of urgency essential for any hardcore band worth their salt. This is fast-as-hell D-beat hardcore, firmly influenced by the canon of past Scandinavian greats. Sure, plenty of current bands follow this tradition, but not all do it justice. While I'll always support DIY music regardless of its polish, I would be lying if I didn't sometimes want a release that stands out from the endless churn of Google's bullshit algorithm-fed YouTube music recommendations that get spewed at me.

RAGRAGE

FAMILY OUTING – Demo 2013 (London, UK)

"... weird and damaged and wrong in a compulsive manner." – Layla

Easily the best thing I found in this dig, mean as shit hardcore. Best tracks were 'Thicko' and 'Sickos', not the same old guitar lines as a lot of bands splashing around in this pool. Same singer as the almighty GOOD THROB, but much more straight-ahead. Already broken up by the time MRR was reviewing this, a classic move. I can't help but love a side project or a one-off. Each tape came with "an individually stamped old postcard from your auntie's crap trip to Ramsgate with her arsehole children," so that's cool.

LITTLE ITALY – Demo Songs (New York City, NY)

"It doesn't immediately strike me as garage, but if I had to encapsulate it in one word, I guess that's closest one I could come up with." – Langford

This is the kind of project I started this column to find. No real releases other than a live radio recording that got put on tape, and this bad photo of them playing in a park to three people is everything to me. It seems like they were tight with the mildly more popular outer borough band DIPERS, they played most of their shows with them. Are the songs good? Eh... 'Telephone' is pretty charming, but I think the fact that they're nothing special is why I like them listening back.

P.S. if anybody in Montreal knows who made the DEVIL'S DICK recording reach out – inquiring minds would like to know who's responsible.

INTERVIEW WITH

JETSAM are a drum + bass + vocals powerviolence three-piece from Montreal. In the few short years they've been active, JETSAM have played shows in nearly every corner of the local scene. Recently, they went on their first small tours out of the Toronto-Montreal-Quebec City corridor, and if you haven't heard of them already I expect you will soon. Jack (vocals, they/them) and Neon (bass, she/her) answered my questions by e-mail in January 2025.

Martin Force: What is the story of JETSAM? How did the band start? What was the goal? What is the mission statement of the band? Where did the name JETSAM come from?

Jack: Neon and I were both taking drum lessons from a friend and whenever we were on our way to lessons, we'd trade music back and forth that we liked the drums in. At some point I played her a CLOUD RAT song and we started talking about how we wanted to start a powerviolence band. Maybe a week or so later, we were picking up some drums from Neon's friend Wawa (who works at a place that picks up and repurposes garbage) and Neon mentioned this idea to him, and he was like "rad wanna jam right now?" So we went to our jam space and within the next hour, we'd written our first song (trigger discipline), and then over the next three weeks, we wrote three more songs (excoriate, sine spe recuperandi, and clayborne). At that point all that was left was to start playing shows.

Neon: I just wanted to be able to play in a band and not be the vocalist. I wanted to play really heavy and fast bass without a guitar in sight. High frequencies and treble sounds have always really upset

points to their more hardcore influences (an influence that peeks out throughout). At around the one minute mark, we are graced with an all-out crust attack that doesn't stop for the remaining 30 minutes of this record. The vocals are soaked in reverb, the drumming is blistering, and the guitar strumming sounds like the east coast "banana" crust that I grew up with and still love to this day. Tempo changes keep it interesting and alternate between a need to pump your fist in the air as fast as humanly possible and a need to put it through a brick wall (or a fascist's face).

My favorite part of this record is the middle of "In Lieu Of Flowers" when the song drops out and slowly a riff comes in that I have described as the riff I want playing while charging into battle. It is slow, it is heavy, and it is oddly melodic. The riff is perfect. It feeds right back into a crunching mid-tempo riff that makes your want to bang your fucking head off.

My favorite record of the year might have come out on the first day. For fans of all the crust greats, HHIG, TRAGEDY, DOOM, HELLSHOCK, etc. If you know a crust war veteran who has not heard of this band or this release yet, it is your obligation to send it to them immediately.

Listen here: https://membranehc.bandcamp.com/album/mem-brane

—Greg the Builder

PNOOM – Energy CS

This Montreal band is a secret gem. I had never really delved into their recorded output before, as I assumed it would not live up to the feeling of their live shows, often delivered through copious amounts of amps and pedals. Well I guess the joke's on me because this new album is impressive. The recording itself is outstanding, and they really capture the essence of what the band is about without any gear gluttony on display. You still get volume, tone and the feeling of being wrapped-up in a sonic haze. The obvious comparison would be the more explorative SONIC YOUTH material, but some of the songs here have this dizzy repetitiveness that is reminiscent of late-era LUNGFISH. It's not 'dreamy' either, there's an undeniable tension between all the instruments, like being caught in a magnetic field; and the guitars remain sharp and in your face, not unlike UNWOUND at times. The vocals sound like you're being scolded from a stranger far away, adding for dramatic effect. That's a beautiful record from PNOOM that I hope makes it to vinyl one day, but definitely a band I recommend seeing live every chance you get.

Self-released, listen here: https://noisepnoom.bandcamp.com/album/energy

—Nab

POISON SPEAR – Institutional Trust

Hardcore punk should make you feel like you're losing brain cells with every passing second. And let me tell you this POISON SPEAR release has my brains leaking out my ear while the grin on my face gets more deranged. No gimmicks, no complicated riffs and snotty but guttural vocals make zero compromises. Plus the title track Institutional Trust is a drawn out mosh part that'll have you slamming from side to side, getting low and slow or getting swept up in the feverish

thing is balanced and shines while a layer of high gain covers the whole thing. Trish, who also plays guitar, did a great job recording this (as well as everything else of hers that I've heard). The bass is punchy and helps drive the entire ep, the drums are solid and straight forward in a way that props up the riffs instead of distracts from them. When I sent this to a friend his first response was "well deployed flanger". And not to go unnoticed, the vocals tie it all together in one wild package.

Just looking at the cover, I think it's obvious what bands influence CONDUMB, but these songs never feel derived or unoriginal. The songs are chaotic and when they don't make you want to pogo they are blisteringly fast. My favorite track is 'Coward'. It's hypnotizingly rhythmic at times and the main riff makes me want to smash through a wall. When I finally put my hand into the table saw at work because I can't take the punishment of my reactionary coworker anymore, I hope this is the record I am listening to.

Speaking of the cover, I believe this is the last piece of art by the late Ryan Fromdland, a beloved Philly (and Florida) punk whose art and flyers has been gracing punk for close to two decades. Making nods to the bands and records that influenced him, and in this case CONDUMB, Ryan's style (and humor) has left a lasting impact and we are worse off without him and his vision in this world.

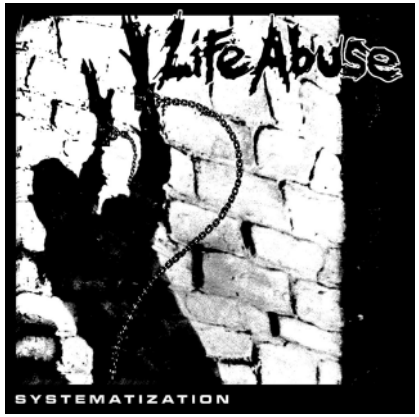
Available soon from Philly's premier label of dumbassery Stupid Bag Records: https://stupidbagrecords.storenvy.com

Listen to it here: https://condumb.bandcamp.com/ and when you inevitably run out of free plays, here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6fZaEl4nhk

—Greg the Builder

LIFE ABUSE – Systemization LP

I checked out this album when I heard that the bass player from END OF A YEAR/SELF DEFENSE FAMILY had a new band and it quickly became a recurring listen. I keep noticing cool parts and details I hadn't before, which is rare for a straight forward punk record. LIFE ABUSE are from Albany, NY and they remind me of the type of bands that would be on something like Havoc Records, or that I'd read about in Heartattack Fanzine. Which is not surprising considering the members are veterans of that



scene, having done time in bands like DEVOID OF FAITH, LIBYANS, LIMP WRIST, THE OATH...

The music is sometimes reminiscent of TALK IS POISON to my ears, or DEATHREAT, but with weird parts a la KILL THE MAN WHO QUESTIONS. I would even describe their sound as 'crust-adjacent', as there are some epic catchy riffs that wouldn't be out of place in a HIS HERO IS GONE or FROM ASHES RISE record; however the songs are a little more restrained and offer more diversity, while still remaining cohesive. This is an excellent record that I'm kind of obsessed with, more people need to check it out! I'm really hoping to get to see this band live.

Released on Armageddon Label. Listen here: https://armageddonlabel.bandcamp.com/album/systematization

—Nab

MEM//BRANE – Self Titled

The first time I heard of MEM//BRANE was when my dad saw them listed in the Bellingham weekly paper. At the time they had only put out their demo but I was hooked from the start. I love this band. Every release has gotten better (the David Wojnarowicz speech that intros their Subcutaneous EP gives me chills every listen). If you start at MEM//BRANE's demo and work through their releases, you can hear the maturing of their sound and songwriting, this S/T record feeling like a culmination.

The record starts off with a haunting, chorus-drenched (almost deathrock) riff paired with rhythmic drumming that transitions into a crunching mid-tempo stomp that I assume

my ears / brain, even as a kid before I could identify the cause of the discomfort. I'm just glad the sound I wanted for myself also ended up resonating with others! Our drum teacher, Sarah, was the drummer in one of my previous bands. She was going to drum in this new idea for a project but ended up having to move out of town. Wawa appeared back into my life out of nowhere and we immediately bonded as a trio.

J: If there was ever a goal for the project, it was just for us to play in a band together, and for me to get to actually play in a band—I'd dabbled in a couple other projects but nothing that really felt like 'mine.' I guess the other goals were to release a full-length record (because Neon had never done that before) and go on tour in Europe, both of which are still in the works.

The name "JETSAM" actually just came from a lyric in the song sine spe recuperandi ("where the waves give and take like so much flotsam and jetsam"), which is something I'd written a long time ago about an abusive relationship I experienced. We were casting around for a band name and Neon picked that out and it just stuck. We both felt like the idea that there are things you have to throw overboard so that the ship doesn't sink really worked for us.

N: There's a pretty obvious analogy with the trans experience there—whether the things left behind end up being family, friends, jobs, or anyone who refuses to give us the baseline dignity we all deserve.

MF: This summer you did some small touring in the USA which was the furthest the band has traveled so far. Where did you go, who did you play with and what were the shows like? What are your highlights of the past summer/year? How was the experience of touring for you all?

J: We played in Syracuse (at Lost Horizon with FED ASH, VOID EMPEROR, and AMOK) and Rochester (at Psychic Garden with FENTANYL TAP WATER) with our friends in SUNROT, and then in Buffalo with HIRS (at Amy's Place with HIRS, ALL MAINE POINTS, MUDDLE, FOREST FIRE). All of the shows were good but Psychic Garden was an extremely cool DIY venue with the raddest sound person in a big old warehouse with a wall of old TV screens behind us while we performed. And Amy's Place just all-around rules, plus that show was in the middle of Pride and it was packed with trans people, and there was a community org doing free 15-minute HIV testing outside the venue.

For me, those out-of-town shows were the highlight of my summer. I love going places and seeing things from a different perspective, and we met some incredibly rad people who are still our friends. It's such an honour to roll up to a city and have people be excited you're there, and it's also an honour to get introduced to new people in this way. We also had a very sweet time at this music gear store in Rochester where the person helping us gave us fudgesicles.

We love touring! We wanna do it more! It's just hard because it is not feasible for bands from so-called Canada to cross into the states—touring visas are incredibly expensive—and then going anywhere else requires flying, which is expensive. We are scheming some things though.

MF: OK, how many drummers have you been through so far? Four? Which drummer was your favorite (kidding)? Last I heard, you are without a permanent drummer after an amicable parting with Marcie. Without jinxing anything in the works, what are you hopes or plans for the drummer slot going forward?

J: We have had two full-time drummers and now three part-time drummers— Wawa who's now playing in OCIOSA, and then Ty from FEED and LEASH AGGRESSION was filling in for us for a bit, then Marcy, who is still killing it in TACHYON and as DJ W1K1L34K5, then Gab from BRUE and APRÈS L'ASPHALTE (who will still drum for us sometimes), and Evelyn from PINK-SNAIL and BRUE. We would love for Gab or Evelyn to become our forever drummer but they are both in so many other rad projects. We love all our drummers equally!

N: The experience with all of them has been very sweet in different ways. I think the worry is always to not lose what made the band click in the first place. We always want to hang out in a way that feels like friendship and family, and to walk out of band practice smiling and excited about the next one.

MF: With the many drummers, there have already been many different iterations of JETSAM. Have all these lineup changes been frustrating? Or do you feel like it's allowed you to experience the band as more of a family/collective? You are also often joined by Kayla (and other friends) on stage to sing with you, so I am wondering if you ever toy with the idea of leaning more into the "expanded JETSAM family" in the future, or if you are craving more stability in the lineup.

J: We joke all the time that it's just the natural inclination of trans bands to wanna become collectives so that we can feature all our extremely cool and talented friends (à la HIRS). The lineup changes have been frustrating only insofar as we keep having to teach the same songs to new people instead of getting to write new songs, but every person we've worked with has been rad and has brought something special to the band, and I do think it's really cool to have these different personalities and visions pull us in different directions. If we are able to get a full-length out this year, we want it to feature friends from all different scenes—expect noise, rap, other instruments, etc.

Ideally someday we can get away with doing the Jenna thing where we just leave an extra mic on stage and anyone can get up and jump in on vocals. As much as Neon and I are the core of the band and are also a couple, we are not precious about our place in this project: we want it to belong to everyone who loves it.

N: The drawback has been the time spent teaching the song and how it has slowed progress, but sharing this music with super talented drummers from different backgrounds has also brought its good share of positive changes. Things are looking good now with Evelyn as our drummer and Gab as our back-up! Both of them also play together in BRUE and I have been helping with bass on APRÈS L'ASPHALTE so this is all a nice exchange that has already started to feel like a small collective in its own way.

MF: Your last release was the Assimilation is Death split 10" with GUMMO from August 2023. Are you working on a new release? Do you feel like your sonic direction or influences have changed since you started? What's the plan for the next release/recording?

JETSAM / GUMMO — Assimilation is Death split

BRUTE
I. Brutocide II. Blowback Kids III. Bite Hard or Die
IV. Blood Mite (VIP) V. Mr. Brute Again (Acoustic)
VI. Barbarism VII. Barbarism by God
BRUTE
BARBARISM

BRUTE – Barbarism

BRUTE is a very appropriate name for this band. Hardcore leaning into powerviolence from Vancouver that sounds like it was written by primitive humans and I mean that in the very best way. Is it recorded perfectly or horribly, you have to decide for yourself. Based on the artwork I assume this is or will soon be out on tape and honestly I'd be a bit afraid that the tape will destroy my tapedeck from too much sand in the casing.

Caution the intro to BBG may have a drastic effect on your ability to stand erect.

Holy shit this is good.

—Vanislejay

COMBUST – Belly of the Beast LP

There's something to be said about being an active band for 7 years, consistently putting out music and honing in on your craft all this time; meanwhile touring literally everywhere, taking no shortcuts. The proof is in the pudding: this record is undeniable. COMBUST never strayed from their initial sound and identity, they are the quintessential modern New York Hard Core band in my opinion. These guys are students of the game and deliver a high-quality record packed to the brim with NYHC bonanza, to a level that not a lot of bands would be able to pull off in my eyes. There's nods to all the classics, and they still manage to make the songs sound unique and not something you've heard a million times, it's no small feat in a genre that's been replicated to oblivion. I hear a lot of KILLING TIME in the riffs, SICK OF IT ALL & DYNAMO in the groove, and CROWN

OF THORNZ & UNDERDOG in some of the song structures and tempo choices. I really appreciate how they seem to challenge themselves by writing songs that rarely replicate a formula used elsewhere on the record.

The album oozes style and personality, with multiple stand out tracks, like the self-titled opener, single "Our Own Breed", or the super fun & catchy "N.Y.H.C"; and of course the guest features are a plenty (MINDFORCE, DANNY DIABLO, MASTERMIND, DMIZE, TERROR...). After the NYHC trophy spending time away in Toronto, San-Antonio and Leeds, Combust finally brought it home

LP out on Triple B Records.

—Nab

CONDUMB – S/T EP

CONDUMB's S/T debut ep does something that I think is nearly impossible: sound very good and very noisy at the same time. Every-

REVIEWS

AYUCABA – Demo 01 CS

Slime punk, egg punk, egg. Chain wave, chain punk, and, eventually, inevitably, similarly, just chain. Does this help? Make more sense? No no no, just keep throwing some shit at the wall so every review sounds like a sales pitch and every band is a camel comprised of diametric sonic interests. D–beat, kang, raw, D–beat raw, UK82; female fronted, fast hardcore, fastcore; Devocore (that's a thing! The author's sweating!)

Oh, good grief, let's not turn this first outing of mine into a referendum on meaningless sub–genre delineations and unfortunate sartorial preferences and let's talk what really matters: vision. Ayucaba's got it. A big, loud, screaming vision that warns of (or, perhaps, beckons) doomsday, strong enough to reverberate from the far flung era of 2023. The vocals, strained and menacing, employ tasteful re–verb without becoming the coward's blanket many in America seem to cozy up under, with the bassist chiming in now and again to drive home a point. The guitars are heavy as life, one holds it down with catchy riffs, the other wanks and shreds, while the bassist took a page from THE SHITLICKERS guidebook on good–bassing and stabbed a few holes in the speakers before taking the fucker to the killing floor and back. The drums roll on like a fucking warmachine.

As American assimilation robbed me of my mother tongue(s), I took a break from writing to translate every song, and what a discovery!: AYUCABA, a word that that earlier forced as–similation could not eradicate. In Guariní, "the one that kills you." AYUCABA, a, forgive me, patron saint to those still fighting, still resisting, the lodestone that holds up the entire vision this five piece has constructed. And those lyr–ics, like the music: big, heavy, a double edged blade: one sharp to cut, one dull to punish. My personal favorite goes something like "I still know how to look up and spit on them from below."

Now, time being, the downside to the vision is you just have to take my word for it. The band has elected to withhold their music from the digital sphere in all capacities, but I'm working on getting my shit situated in a way that will allow me to rip tapes and rekkids, at which point we'll get this shared amongst us vermin.

There are some live recordings that I highly recommend floating around out there, so peep those in the meantime: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVACUcYkZ6Y and https://zaratazarautz.bandcamp.com/album/ayucaba–2024–03–21.

Anyways, uh, foreign language, metal–tinged raw punk from South American ex–pats in Spain, or something.

—Ralph Rivera

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CANADA

*If sending us something other than a letter (like a record/tape for review) from **outside Canada** you must **indicate it has a declared value under $20**. Otherwise, Canada will apply duties and taxes which we cannot afford to pay!

J: Absolutely yes we are working on a new release—two, in fact. One will be a split with Kayla's band OBJECT OF LOATHING, and the second will be a full–length. Our influences change constantly. We both listen to a really wide variety of music (which mostly fall outside of "punk") and most of our songs come out of one of us hearing a riff in something we think is cool and then excitedly bringing it to band practice. That said, I think a general goal we have is to write some more songs that are more like... traditional powerviolence. We've been listening to a lot of like INFEST and CROSSED OUT and MAN IS THE BASTARD (shoutout Eric!!).

N: We've had the songs for a new EP / Split mostly written for a while now, some of which we've been playing live already and a couple more still needing some work. This will be finalized and recorded as soon as we've solidified the current set with Evelyn. Not to jinx it, as you said, but the plan is to get on that right after our Québec to Trois Rivière to Montreal Madhouse little "tour" in a couple of weeks.

MF: After the tours this summer, what are your future tour ambitions? A big long tour? More smaller tours? Europe?

J: EUROPE. And yes, longer tours. Honestly, we'll go wherever will have us as long as we can get there.

N: Europe with GUMMO, absolutely!

MF: Fantasy question: you are booked on a huge North America tour and can bring any current band with you, who do you bring?

J: Hard question!!! And I feel like this could change by the day with me depending on what particular sound I'm into and also who I wanna hang out with for an extended period of time. So today, I say CELL DETH.

N: The easy answer would be OBJECT OF LOATHING. The more complex one would be all of them!

MF: Fantasy question 2: Time travel is possible and you can insert yourself into any package tour or festival of the past. What is it?

J: The package tour part is touching on "never meet your heroes" territory for me and big festivals seem exhausting and overstimulating but... any of the late 80s/early 90s NAPALM DEATH tours where they played with BOLT THROWER or SEPULTURA or FAITH NO MORE. I feel like anyone who knows me was expecting me to say Woodstock 94... but the actual real answer is that I would put us on stage with the KLF and EXTREME NOISE TERROR at the Brits in '92. The current festival that I want to play is Supersonic in Birmingham on any year that THE BUG plays it.

N: Festivals stress me out so much. Too much happening in too little time. You'll mostly find me with the smokers outside trying to feel included despite my sensory overload (too many guitars!). In a way, I'd say any tour where having us there would mean breaking the status quo of 4–5 dudes on stage. Sometime people tell us to chill–out. But we're not chill. We're angry.

MF: How do you feel about the band FLOTSAM AND JETSAM?

J: The thrash band? Call me out but honestly I've never listened to them. I'm glad they went with that instead of "Dredlox."

N: Watching the Wading Through The Darkness music video now and this is sick actually. Also the vocalist is super pretty! It's a bit slow for my taste but there's a time and place for that.

J: Okay, I just spent some time listening to them and while the vocals don't do it for me now, this is very much the kind of thrash I would've been into as a teenager. I do love that 80s and 90s thrash tended to have a lot of socially aware lyrics.

MF: JETSAM plays in Montreal a lot, and you've played a huge variety of shows. My impression is that you get asked to play/do a lot, and say "yes" as much as you can to get your message out there. But what's the strangest, dumbest, or worst offer you've turned down?

J: We do get asked to play a lot! And up until this year, we've said no as little as possible. At first it was because we just wanted to play shows and were kind of surprised that anyone would ask us, and then it was because we just kept getting asked to play cool shows. We've had some cringey requests where someone DMs us on Instagram to say they "really like our vibe" and can we play with their band and then it's just a bunch of shirtless dudes in what seems like a very apolitical punk band, but honestly if they seem fun and we're available, sometimes we'll say yes anyway.

N: We occasionally book shows in places we really want to go, or because we need a stop between two destinations in a tour. But for the very busy schedule we've maintained, it has mostly booked itself. We say yes because people ask us, and people show up, and because every show is new super talented friends we make. And yeah, we haven't had a lot of bad experiences! We politely say we're too busy if it feels too obvious of a diversity hire situation... But we also make a point of not just preaching to the choir. Taking space in a show full of shirtless dudes can feel more like work, but it's pretty important.

J: Hot take, but one of the only things we've consistently turned down is when we get asked by some local promotion company less than a week out from a show to "hop on" a bill with a big touring band, for $250. It isn't the money because that's obviously not the reason we're doing this, it's that these companies themselves are making bank on these big Ticketmaster-sponsored tours and it's frankly an insult to be asked to fill their opener hole as an afterthought, especially if it seems like we'd be the diversity hire on the bill, and ESPECIALLY if we wouldn't otherwise be able to afford to go to the show / if our friends can't afford to go.

MF: Besides your Bandcamp, you also have your music up on a simple faircamp-based website. Besides your Instagram, you also have a band account on Mastodon. [Disclosure for the reader: I operate both of those services!]. Your music isn't on Spotify, or other major streaming/distribution platforms. Can you talk about your politics or reasoning behind these decisions?

J: We are always trying to straddle the line between accessibility and propping up shit that is actively destroying DIY music. You were actually the person that pulled the wool off my eyes about Bandcamp: I remember you being like "I don't put my music there because someday they're gonna sell out or get shut down and then who's gonna own it" and that was way before they got bought out. Our music is on Bandcamp because IMO it is the place where music-minded people go to find stuff, especially independent stuff. But it is also really important for us to make sure it's in other places like faircamp so that it doesn't disappear if Songtradr or whoever decides to fuck us all.

surgence does ultimately stem from social media. And then the real ones focus on showing up to shows and making shit. It was a gateway.

For me it was all through YouTube. I watched Decline of Western Civilization when I was 11 (it was free on YouTube) and then everything went from there. I had already been listening to goth/post punk because I had a childhood friend who's dad was really into it and he showed me stuff.

And then I just started finding more shit through the algorithm. Getting into punk has made me focus on connecting IRL but it my path into it came from the digital realm. My demographic has a lot of toxic individualism perpetuated through social media and a consequence of how capitalism has progressed which has lead to social isolation and deprivation of real life experiences. Punk saved me from that and made me be active in my own life outside of a screen and my bedroom

MF: What makes good crust pants?

Ava: Time

Aíne: There's a (Japanese?) zine on how to make crust pants, and it's a 10/10 read. Extremely funny and everything you need to know

MF: Anything I missed that you want to shout out?

Aíne: The State and Capital are a social relationship and must be rooted out firstly from our minds. THERE'S NO AUTHORITY BUT YOURSELF, OBJECT, REFUSE, AND REJECT ABUSE!

Listen to the Last Frost Demo here: https://portaltomb.bandcamp.com/album/last-frost-demo. First press on Sore Mind and second press on Filth Holocaust are sold out!

Ava: My list is: LOVE AND COMPASSION, WITNESS (RIP), ALEMENT, SAVAGE PLEASURE, SPORUS, TERMINAL FILTH. I'm not as big of a fan of the war-metal leaning crust cause I think it gets stale and sort of misses the point: the somber or nihilistic atmosphere a lot of great old crust captures. CONTAGIUM is incredible one of the best crust projects of late I've heard — Aíne put me onto them cause I had no idea about them.

MF: What do you all think about the current state of punk in general? Is there too much Instagram and Spotify? I feel like this is less of a problem in the crust subgenre but there are still crust Instagram accounts and all that. How bad is it and what can we do?

Ava: Prioritize bands that don't feed into it. It's tricky because there's striking a balance as people who put a lot of time into their music need to find ways to feed themselves but good punk music is antithetical to money making and forms of capitalization . Spotify doesn't make you any money/is exploitative which is part of the issue but it can help find listeners who aren't tapped into DIY... but I personally don't want to put PORTAL TOMB on Spotify. I'm not sure if YouTube is necessarily better (because Google) but I think accounts that serve as like digital distros sort of like reposting punk stuff they like for more people to see is good? But I don't know how to understand the matrix. Bandcamp seems like the most ethical way to digitally access stuff to me.

Aíne: Spotify can lick my asshole and Instagram is an ideological hellworld. Those things have nothing to do with punk in my opinion, and while I understand their utility in promotion, fuck all of that. There's no ethical consumption under capitalism, but the problem with these technologies not only in their effect on art, but their role in the military industrial complex cannot be understated. I think the current state of punk is rife with contradiction. In some ways punk appears more alive than it has been in a long time, in other ways it can feel more empty and disingenuous than ever. I think it's probably what we make of it. I think if punk really needs Spotify or Instagram to survive, it's already dead.

Ava: There's a lot of interest in crust from my age group but a lot of it seems fashion focused / crust pants-centric as opposed to putting most energy into creating interesting music. Seems like a lot of copy / paste with the aesthetics and run of the mill musical regurgitation.

But it's great that the "scene" is more active and so many people come support. I think people my age can get caught up in this punk Instagram clout and conforming to what they think is cool on the internet. Maybe they put too much focus on things like fashion or self presentation above making music and embodying the values behind the aesthetic. I think it's because we are all so young and many of us former misfits and having crust is a way to "fit in" and find others like us when we are all trying to decide who/how/what we want to be.

Tons of kids my age are also learning their instruments to be in bands which is great. I just got lucky to be taken under Aíne's wing otherwise I'd probably just be writing stuff in voice memos in my room. I'm really happy to see more people my age interested and committed to it but I think a lot of the focus on aesthetics, self fashioning and presentation over social media is corny. Not to say I don't think about my crust pants a lot. But it's not all about studding and acquiring every bootleg tee under the sun.

Regarding Spotify and Instagram, they don't need those things. But coming from my perspective as Gen Z they have, for better or for worse, gotten a lot more people to "tune in" so they can "tune out." My demographic grew up in a totally digital age. And a lot of the crust re-

We will not put it on Spotify because we refuse to have our music and the people who wanna listen to it being used to line the pockets of bigots and genocidaires who see music as nothing more than a market. And, I think the people who want to listen to us are not necessarily finding new music on streaming apps.

MF: Lit Corner! You have a song called "Clayborne" which, besides being a shout-out to the friends in CLAYBORNE, is your own Mars triology (by Kim Stanley Robinson)-based track. "New Colossus" opens with a lengthy quote from anarchist Voltairine de Cleyre. I also get a vibe from "Anéantir le Néant" that there is a text or writing referenced (my guess: maybe baedan?). What is the source or reference in that song? Any other references in your lyrics you want to draw attention to?

J: You basically nailed it. anéantir le néant is specifically from "Preliminary Notes on Modes of Reproduction" (2010) by gender mutiny, and both that and villain are heavily inspired by the various essays in What Is Gender Nihilism? (2019) from Contagion Press, especially "My Words to Victor Frankenstein Above the Village of Chamounix: Performing Transgender Rage" (1994) by Susan Stryker. Both songs are about how we see the very concept of gender as incompatible with a just/free world.

The intro to new colossus is Voltairine de Cleyre (quoted by Emma Goldman), and the lyrics draw a lot from Carceral Capitalism (2018) by Jackie Wang, as well as a story that I thought I read there (but maybe it was somewhere) else about an American doctor who saw the incarcerated men at Holmesburg prison in Philadelphia and said "All I saw before me were acres of skin. It was like a farmer seeing a field for the first time." He proceeded to run years of medical and cosmetic testing on them, some of which was horribly painful and disfiguring. The title "new colossus" is the name of the poem Emma Lazarus wrote about the statue of liberty. I guess there are a lot of literary references in our lyrics because I have a lit degree.

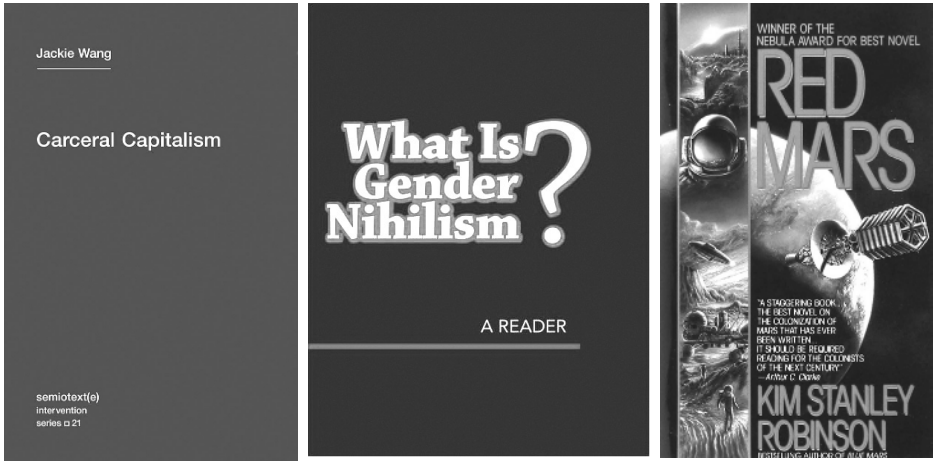
N: Music writing for us looks like the three of us sharing thoughts on riffs and vibes and a lyrical theme. Then Jack ends up sat down with 50 tabs open on their browser and 4 physical books opened in front of them, looking for inspiration and references and cheering us whenever the riffs feel good. They're a huge nerd.

MF: What are your favorite books or writers, fiction or non-fiction, that most heavily influence the band? Both in terms of lyrics directly, but also thematically. Writing that brings together for you the themes of queerness, resistance, rage, mental health and brutality?

J: Kim Stanley Robinson is obviously a big influence. There's a moment where his character Frank Chalmers is (IIRC) described as "prone to violence, prone to despair" and as much as he's not the character I wanna identify with, well...

I'm not necessarily organized enough to have specific writers I look to for specific things; it's whatever I'm reading or have in my sight at a given moment. That said, I look to Diane di Prima's poems a lot when I'm trying to figure out how to write lyrics. I look at the lyrics of songs that make me feel something. And I look to whatever my smarter and more organized friends are reading.

N: When I was still a punk baby, I listened to a CRASS album. Now here we are! I'd say I draw more inspiration from my own life, my own grief, my friends, and my community than from any literature. But if I had to name one it would be Emma Goldman.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Carceral Capitalism
semiotext(e)
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What Is Gender Nihilism?
A READER
WINNER OF THE NEBULA AWARD FOR BEST NOVEL
RED MARS
"A STAGGERING BOOK... THE BEST NOVEL ON THE COLONIZATION OF MARS THAT HAS EVER BEEN WRITTEN. IT SHOULD BE REQUIRED READING FOR THE COLONISTS OF THE NEXT CENTURY."
—Arthur C. Clarke
KIM STANLEY ROBINSON

MF: On a lighter note what fiction are you reading lately?

J: I mostly read fiction! I don't have a great attention span. I've just finished all of the Murderbot books and I'm currently reading Blindsight by Peter Watts.

N: Not to expose myself too much as a big loser here, but most of my reading time is used up reading about and preparing for the next TTRPG session, usually in a context of personal, political, corporate, and/or space horror. I like reading about scary times in space and cyberpunk futures. MOTHERSHIP is the one that's been keeping my attention lately.

MF: PV Corner! Normally I like to ask people how they got into punk or hardcore, but since we are all are in powerviolence bands here, how did you all get into powerviolence? What was the first time you encountered it?

J: I blushingly admit that it was VILE INTENT [the interviewer's band] that introduced me to powerviolence and got it stuck in my mind as the home for music that is loud, angry, and unapologetically political—and that was in around 2011. Before that, I really was not into punk at all, never mind hardcore—those were the genres that the guys who picked on me listened to. I grew up listening to metal, mostly, made the jump from post-metal to screamo, and then to grindcore and powerviolence. G.L.O.S.S. was the first hardcore punk band that made me pay attention to the genre. I read this article once that described the difference between grindcore and powerviolence as something like: "grindcore is the sound of the apocalypse of late capitalism and powerviolence is the outcry of the people trying to survive that apocalypse" and I was like: yeah, that is the legacy within which I want to situate my band.

N: I've always listened to a lot of music genres, but with punk I started the the usual with anarcho stuff. Crust punk was an easy gateway toward powerviolence and grindcore. I always needed my music to be faster and with more blast beats, so I'd listen to a lot of black or death metal, but the scene itself was such a turn-off. Perhaps ironically, powerviolence ended up being my safe haven. CLOUD RAT was definitely one of my big eye openers!

Ava: I'm working on vocals with a project. That's all I can disclose because it's still sort of up in air if we will release anything — depends how bad I suck.

Aíne: I play a fair bit of traditional Celtic folk music when I have the time, but no other bands at the moment. As for Alys, as far as I know she's a current member of MOTORWOLF, MANDRAGORA, and NIL CVLT.

MF: Is crust back? Did it ever leave? What are some current bands you think are doing crust right or that get you excited about crust?

Aíne: I think Crust tends to persist regardless of who's paying attention. It does seem like interest comes and goes, and as far as listenership/a general scene I think we're seeing another wave of revival — a resurgence in interest around the old school sound. My uneducated opinion is that as things get stale in the punk trends, people find renewed inspiration by looking back to the classic bands who approached things with a different ethos and paved the way. Bands that didn't have to navigate the type of commodification we see in what looks now more like a market relationship with "punk characteristics."

Some current bands I find inspiring off the top of my head are FATUM, CANCER SPREADING, LIFE, INSTINCT OF SURVIVAL. Lots of good stuff out of New York at the moment like FLOWER, LOVE AND COMPASSION, MMI, the short lived WITNESS. Vancouver's EXTENSIVE SLAUGHTER, some solid US acts like ALEMENT, AXEFEAR, SAVAGE PLEASURE. There are many more, and classics who won't quit like DEVIATED INSTINCT, and dear Jesus CONTAGIUM is back baby!! BLACK DOG is incredible and although they're no longer playing, ZYGOME is a massive influence for me. I swear I'm not trying to steal their riffs... Locally, WARKRUSHER and A.T.E.R. are keeping it very real.

MF: What was the process like for writing and recording the Last Frost Demo?

Aíne: Excruciating.

Some riffs I had for years, or had many variations of for years, and some were written more recently to build context for the songs. Ava and I poured over arrangements for many months while we worked out the general direction of things, and then we started putting things together with me swapping between guitar and drums.

When Alys joined the band, she took the drums to a place I couldn't have personally and I got to focus on guitar and we tweaked the arrangements for a while together, and when Camil came in we had the opportunity to add some harmonies and play the tracks endlessly until they felt right. For recording, it was all DIY at Ham space using odds and ends I packed here from the West coast and whatever we could find. The drums were recorded in 4 tracks, no tom mics, and a mono tape recorder in the room buried in the mix somewhere.

The mix took a lifetime with pretty limited gear and some pretty sloppy recording work on my part. In the end I think we more or less captured the sound we were aiming for, and Cody Baresich at Circle A Studios did a perfect job translating that with mastering for the tape/digital release. I would never finish anything without his help, let alone know how to hold a microphone in the first place. Long live Cody.

MF: There's a new recording coming out soon. Was the process for that smoother? How will it be released?

Aíne: At the moment we're finishing editing our next release to send to Circle A Studios for mixing and mastering. I think I can speak for everyone in saying this recording was significantly more excruciating. Endless technical difficulties and broken gear, a dead computer, and more suffering in general. It's DIY once again, but I think in the end we pushed through to a stronger recording — and one that's more representative of where the band is at now. The track/tracks are for a short and nasty split with our dear friends, Vancouver's EXTENSIVE SLAUGHTER to be released as a 7" on Archaic Records and tape on Montreal's Sore Mind.

MF: Beyond the new release, what are upcoming live shows or tour plans you all are excited about?

Aíne: We'll be playing SCORCHED EARTH in Vancouver with DEVIATED INSTINCT, STORM-CROW, and East coast crust legends CONTAGIUM in June, among many other insane crust acts, and a day before that in Victoria with HEDONIST and STREET GLOVES. We'll also be at A Varning From Montreal again in the fall. Not much for tour plans, but we'll be playing some sneaky dates in the eastern states this summer. Boston/New York/Philly.

Ava: I wanna play Mexico with PORTAL TOMB.

MF: What other current or in-the-works side projects you want to tell us about?

MF: Speak about the politics of the band. How does JETSAM identify politically? How important is this identity to the band, and how you write music, perform, reproduce the band? Is JETSAM an anarchist band?

J: I am an anarchist, an anarchism specifically informed by feminism and transness, and that not just informs but is integral to the way I write music, perform, and interface with the world as part of the band. It isn't that the band is a vehicle for me/us to express our politics but just that like, my politics are the filter through which I experience the world. Personally I would say that we are an anarchist band, yes. That is something that has united every member of this band and I can't imagine that we would get along well enough with someone who isn't at least vaguely an anarchist to make music with them.

N: I've always admired bands who made very reactionary music in the sense of reacting to what's going on around them. Songs or even full albums as a response to an event in the world. We are anarchists and are an anarchist band by virtue of the way we navigate the world and the scene and the things we talk about. We will always be comfortable being read as such! We never set out to be a band by and for trans people, and never spoke about whether this was going to be a project about anarchism. It became those things because those things are who we are!

MF: Can you give a brief scene report of the milieu and context around JETSAM in Montreal? What scene or scenes do you feel a part of, and how would you describe them to an outsider? What bands and projects should people check out? What recent local happenings are most inspiring to you all?

J: The first scene to really embrace us here was the grind scene; our first show was as the last-minute seventh band thrown on a six-band grind bill at [the anarchist social centre] L'achoppe, and we've played a lot of big grind shows around Quebec since then. But we've also been accepted into what I'd characterize as the queer(core) screamo scenes (especially outside of Quebec because the screamo scene here is very francophone), the crustpunk scene via playing at Traxide, the SHARPs, the indie cool-guy heavy music scene via playing with bands like THE BODY, the plateau punk scene, and this rad scene that I don't have a name for that's mostly like 20-somethings making all kinds of freaky loud music, which is funny because we could be their parents... we're all over the place and we like it that way. We're set to play Montreal Madhouse at the end of this month (January, 2025) which will be our biggest foray into the hardcore scene.

By virtue of the fact that we also book shows, and specifically have been booking a series of free shows that feature trans bands of every genre, and the fact that we are trans—we have a big and thriving community of trans musicians around us.

I think it can be said of all these scenes that they can feel really insular and forbidding to newcomers or anyone who doesn't fit the specific hyper-regional aesthetic of the scene, but it turns out that almost everyone is a sweetheart. This has honestly even been true of the all-dude grind fests we've played where Neon and I were the only people on the bill who weren't cis men. We came outta the gate expecting to get so much hate for taking up that space and calling ourselves a powerviolence band and writing songs that often stray very far from the powerviolence/hardcore formula, and it just has never happened. Everyone, everywhere has been lovely to us, with very very few exceptions. Even more than that, a shocking number of people have seemed to really get what we do: they understand who our music is for and why we do it, and they make space for the freaks and queers.

It feels almost impossible to recommend bands because there are always SO many and they're SO good and did I mention my attention span. I'll always shout out our besties in OBJECT OF LOATHING, TYPEFACE, RATPISS and VVOMB. I love HRT and LOBOTOMITE and THE PUBES and DUREX and STREET GLOVES and MULCH. I think TRUCK VIOLENCE and NO WAVES and BIRDS OF PRRREY are local bands to keep eyes on.

I think the thing I'm personally most excited for is seeing the ways in which all the little microscenes are bleeding into each other. Montreal Madhouse booking bands that aren't strictly hardcore bands, unlikely bills, Turbo Haus kids going to Traxide (RIP) and vice versa, and bands that intentionally transgress the boundaries. That's the good stuff.

N: I think Jack said it all, so I'll just add some of our local crushes like CLAYBORNE, TONNES, BACKXWASH, TEMPETE, GUHN TWEI, MULCH, DUREX, and VERIFY <3

Above and below: A few local shows JETSAM has played/booked

MF: How did the band start? You and Alys both played together in SPORUS and moved here? Were you already planning to start something?

Aíne: Alys and I have known each other for years, both of us coming from Victoria, BC. We played together for years in SPORUS (now based in Vancouver). Ava and Camil come from Brooklyn, NY and Sofia, Bulgaria respectively. PORTAL TOMB was initially something I had planned as a recording project for many years, but came to fruition instead as a full band after I met Ava here in Montreal and started plotting a Stenchcore/Crust project together. I knew Alys was the one to play drums when things started coming together in the writing process, largely because she's a way better drummer than me haha. It's rare to find someone with both her technical skill and the energy and style for punk on the drums. I met Camil through work, and they learned everything we had worked on for almost a year in about 30 minutes, so the choice for second guitar was obvious.

Ava: Aíne wanted to do PORTAL TOMB as a solo project but I was like if you need help let me know hehe and then Aíne taught me the riffs and we went from there. Aíne took me under their wing / a leap of faith with me cause I had only really been playing bass in my room for a couple years and never saw myself playing in a band for some reason. But we had really similar music tastes and they took a chance on me and now we are besties and have awesome band with Alys and Camil.

MF: How did you find Camil?

Aíne: Camil was my metalhead coworker who recognized all my band shirts until I was like "I bet you play the guitar. I bet you play the guitar better than me, you should join my Crust band." And convinced them by saying it'll be "kind of like BOLT THROWER" (lying). Also a leftist metalhead. Hired.

MF: Is it true that you made Camil wear a bullet belt?

Ava: Yes.

Aíne: Debatable.

Ava: And told him no more vans. It's true.

Aíne: Yeah that definitely happened.

MF: How you define PORTAL TOMB? Just pure stenchcore?

Aíne: I think of PORTAL TOMB as Stenchcore/Crust. I'm sure the details are irrelevant, but to say Stenchcore to me distinguishes it somewhat from the more limited genre that Crust has in some ways become. When I think of Stenchcore I think of a more experimental, raw, and extreme sound that shows more of it's Anarcho-Punk, Metal, and Post-Punk roots. It's all Crust in the end.

Ava: We like da British stuffs.

MF: Is Portal Tomb a queer band? A band with queers in it? How do you bring your respective queer identities to playing crust?

Aíne: CRUST IS GAY WHAT CAN WE DO.

Ava: We gay.

PORTAL TOMB Interview

If you follow what's new in contemprary crust, you will have heard of Montreal's PORTAL TOMB and their Last Frost Demo *released on Sore Mind last year. I started a Signal group with Aíne and Ava to chat about the band.*

Photos by Slim.

Martin Force: Who is in PORTAL TOMB and what were everyone's previous bands?

Aíne: PORTAL TOMB is: Aíne (guitar, vocals), Ava (Bass), Camil (Guitar), and Alys (Drums).

Alys (drums) has played in MOTORWOLF, SPORUS, MANDRAGORA, SHIBBOLETH, DISPHORIA, MST, DOMESTICATED, MORIBUND, VEIN SPLITTER, NIL CVLT DEATH GANG to give the short-list. I've played previously in SPORUS, INFANTILE DISSENTION, NOTACOST, THERMOKARST, KNACKER'S YARD, and ATTRITION — maybe that's it? My memory is failing as I descend into my twilight years... I played in THE FACTORY SMOKE to name another Trad folk band. I've done some work with Vancouver's NORILLAG, although I'm not a member.

For Ava and Camil (guitar), this is their first fully fleshed out project, though I believe Ava is working on a few things behind the scenes.

Interview with Wargasm Records (Istanbul)

by Ghas attack

Ghas of A World Divided bring us this interview with Charged Can, founder of Wargasm Records/Fest based in Istanbul.

Ghas: Hey Can! Tell us about your current projects, I know you've been busy!

Charged Can: Hi Ghas, DIE IN VAIN and REASON WHY, my two sibling bands! Happy to in-volve with those bands because we're doing our favorite two era of punk rock

G: I saw that you have been touring across Europe in the last few weeks. Can you tell us about that?

CC: Yes! We were on tour with DIE IN VAIN, we had total blast. It was covering Novi Sad, Ber-lin, Lübeck, Copenhagen and Goteburg. We played at To Be Punk Fest in Novi Sad and it was the original idea to start touring. All the hospitality was second to none.

G: Ive been to a few Wargasm fests and loved it. Let's talk about the Istanbul punk scene and and the importance of having such a yearly festival?

CC: İstanbul punk scene could be the most non-reliable one on the whole planet. Always have big up and downs, dramas and such a horrible people around. We're always grateful to work with decent bands and people. That's why we're motivated somehow. Putting a festi-val like this, is a important part of it to gather all the punks, skins and weirdos at least once a year to catch their favorite acts.

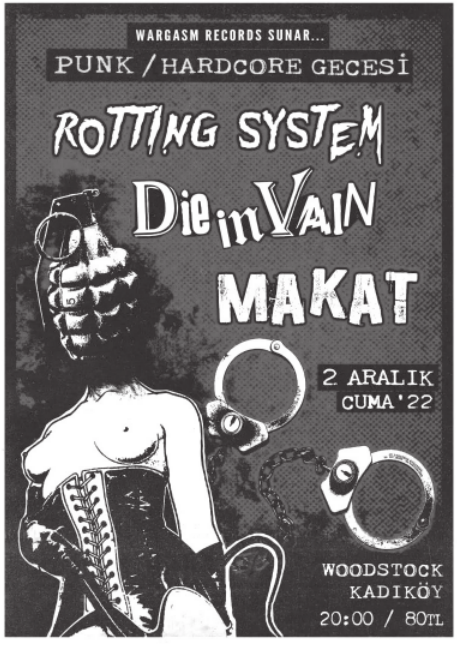
G: What are some of the challenging aspects of being a punk in Istanbul vs Europe?

CC: Dealing with the people is the biggest challenge. It's hard to count on every–one even they want to participate to the scene. We expect solidarity and we don't want abusers, greedy people who don't really understand what's going on. Rising of the social media effects some around in a bad way. Some want fame, money, want to be on the screen. We've a thick red line that divide the bands that we don't want to deal with. That's why it's always challenging when we expect from others to be in DIY aspect

Above and last page: DIE IN VAIN live

G: Tell us about what is coming up in 2025 in Istanbul in terms of shows or other projects

CC: The next Wargasm Fest will take a place at Karga as usual and it will be on November 7th–8th 2025. We have only one confirmed band for now, working for the rest. And we've couple of more shows on the first half of the new year.



DJBP: I'm pretty into the innocuous band name trend in punk right now. Shit like LYSOL and KLEENER. I not only count DUREX in this class of bands, but I also think it's like, the best band name I've ever heard. I recall Felix mentioning something about the name being a point of heated disagreement early on. What was up with that?

A: I thought it was really good because it's hard and sexy.

K: When Felix first suggested the name, it was before Alex and Hannah joined, and the members then were NOT enthusiastic. As I remember, Alex was down right away though.

F: I had been saving it for a while. I thought it sounded kind of like that band MATRIX — not that the tunes ended up being like that, but it made me laugh and it just sounded like a dumb hardcore band.

DJBP: What's everyone's favourite riff or musical moment on SHAME?

F: I think Knife is my favourite track.

H: The breakdown in diver is my fav.

DJBP: What are your least favourite DUREX songs and why?

A: Lasso and we don't play it anymore.

K: There are a few on the demo that fall flat for me now, we were still figuring out what the vibe was though so that makes sense. We've been pushing faster and meaner.

DJBP: If you could organize a dream show consisting of two Montréal locals, two Ontario bands (since I know three fourths of you are from Ford Nation) and one out–of–town band from anywhere on the planet, what would that be and at which venue would it go down?

A: SIYAHKAL, Us?, FAZE and bring FERAL back from the grave (5 bands is too many)

F: Are we one of the Montreal bands? Let's say us, BRAN VAN 3000, any band from Ontario that Emily Hohenadel plays in right now, BARROW WIGHT (Tolkien themed black metal from Ottawa) and IRON MAIDEN.

DJBP: Are there any trends in punk right now that you love, hate, or hate to love?

K: I've been really here for fast, a couple tasteful breakdowns if you want. But the releases that have really grabbed me recently are silly breakneck fast hardcore punk.

F: I'm hoping to see more fake British accents — HOMEFRONT sort of does this. And a return of drunk punx.

H: I love a gimmick. Costumes. Maybe an unpopular opinion...

DJBP: Any future plans?

A: West coast? North East US? Asia 2026..... ?

K: We're playing Lawnya Vanya in Newfoundland in June and I'm excited to either see ice–bergs or whales.

F: Full length release in the works.

DJBP: I understand that Hannah was the original singer of the band before swapping roles with former bassman and current vocalist Alex. What caused the switch up and how did that period of transition / adjustment play out?

K: The first show where Hannah realized they probably couldn't do vocals was SOTO Fest two years ago, we were supposed to be playing the park show. And rather than not play, or play without a vocalist (boring), we decided to karaoke our songs. Which, because no one really knew our songs anyway, meant a bunch of our friends ad-libbed lyrics. It was extremely fun and cute. Highly recommend if you ever find yourself in this situation, especially if that situation is also in the park.

H: I broke my voice from improper yelling technique and working at a call centre at the same time. I got something called muscle tension dysphonia. It hurt to talk for about 8 months so I barely talked. Anyways no one knew how long it would go on for and we had tours and shows planned so we had to come up with a solution fast. I didn't want to be the reason we cancel everything so originally Alex being the vocalist was a temporary solution. But as time went on and my voice still wasn't 100% we decided it'd be best to make it a permanent switch, for consistency.

DJBP: Does Hannah reserve any involvement in lyric writing as the OG wordsmith? Are the words something you guys talk about as a group?

A: I kinda write the songs on the spot at jam and then doctor them to be better. I generally just ask everyone if it sounds OK but I don't think they can really hear me. Anyone could chime in if they wanted to.

H: For lyrics we kind of reserve all the word power to the vocalist, so that's all Alex now. For titles to EPs and demos we all brainstorm together.

DJBP: Who's going to take over the role of vocalist next?

F: You — The Reader of The Counterforce.

DJBP: Would you / have you considered incorporating the actual Durex brand logo on your merch or would that be some kind of sin? I think it'd be funny.

A: I have tried to suggest it. We have joked about including their slogans "love your way." Personally I think "Love. Sex. Durex" is kind of unhinged.

K: I refuse to dress up as a condom.

H: I think we should all dress up like condoms. We should also give away Durex condoms at shows. I think it'd be awesome

Montreal's DUREX is Alex (vocals), Kelly (drums), Hannah (bass) and Felix (guitar). They just released their second tape "SHAME". Interview contributed by DJ Buckingham Palace.

DJBP: To start, I'd like to give some props to Kelly who came through with an excellent engineering and mix-job from behind the drum kit on this new tape! It would seem that you guys are well capable of handling pretty much any and all band things internally from recording, to artwork, to merch, and all the rest. However, I can't help but notice one unfamiliar name in the SHAME credits! Who is Papa Boom Bam Sam and how did your working relationship form? Should we attribute DUREX's masterful balance of cutting clarity and searing noise to the audio mastering of Mr. Papa?

Alex: Kelly's daddio.

Kelly: Papa of boom bam sam obviously.

Hannah: Father of kellington.

DJBP: You guys started back in 2023, right? How did the band come together?

K: I don't remember the brunch maybe I wasn't there — but Felix asked me outside of a show if I wanted to drum in a new project a little after they moved here. Originally it was me, Felix and two other people it didn't work out with for scheduling reasons. We flailed for a bit but got Alex on bass, then Hannah on vocals. I didn't really know Hannah yet which is probably why I wasn't invited to brunch.

Felix: I approached Kelly first cuz I needed a drummer, this would've been like, spring / summer 2022? I had moved to Montreal at the end of 2021 and hadn't been doing much rocking in Ottawa previously cuz of Covid. I was anxious to start playing in bands again ASAP. I think Kelly was at this brunch — some spot in the old port I think — but I also remember telling Hannah they would be good at doing vocals in a hardcore band before that.

H: They asked me to join over brunch, it was very posh. They told me their name was Durex and I was like "LOL okay."

DJBP: Are there any specific bands or styles that inspired you guys in the beginning and have there been new additions and/or crossed out names on that list?

A: KISS and THE BEATLES

F: Originally I really wanted to imitate fast European–style hardcore with a good mix of d–beat and tupa tupa parts like RIISTETYT, KAAOS, WRETCHED, etc. All mostly have relatively clean / not totally blown out guitars too, which I dig. Of course all the Swedish stuff and the bands that rip that off are big for me. KREMLIN and ASILE are two Canadian bands who had really excellent takes on that style and I go to a lot when I'm writing tunes. I think we've just dialed into the style I mentioned more as time has gone on.

DJBP: Your "press" photo on bandcamp shows the four of you with the lonesome remains of Prince Edward Island's defunct Science & Adventure theme park almost 40 kilometers from town. I gather that the group doesn't mind making a detour for the sake of recreation between road shows. What makes for an ideal sightseeing destination when there's time to kill on tour? Any favourites from the past?

A: I can't remember if we saw it from the road and had to stop by or if we found it on google maps but the groundskeepers did not like us exploring the space shuttle ... I have a general knack for seeing oversized or miniature objects — however, my favourite stop we've done on tour as a band was going to Niagara Falls and chilling on Clifton Hill... although, we did not hit the upside down house — another personal favourite. Notably, Biff took us on an EPIC tour of Buffalo and exploring the abandoned train station was awesome as well.

K: We were definitely just driving and saw the shuttle and were like "what the fuck is that." As the resident party pooper/schedule keeper I'm often shutting down detours and stops in favour of being on time and not missing soundcheck. It's a balance.

F: Buffalo central terminal ruled. Waterfronts are a must — PEI ruled for that.

H: I love an abandoned building or somewhere very high up. Hard to go wrong with that.

DJBP: On the topic of exploration on tour; what are your tips on uncovering the best / oddest / rarest geographic gems on the road? How often does the band stumble upon something cool by accident?

A: I mean we are two drivers in the band and we don't like to drive for long amounts of time, so scheduling in time to stop is important. Doing your research or just asking people can help with finding fun stops.

F: Just walking in a random direction away from the venue between soundcheck and doors can be fruitful.

H: Asking people who live in the area for tips on where to stop has been hands down the most guaranteed good time.

DJBP: On the flip, what are some niche activities you would suggest to an out–of–town band in your hometown of Montréal?

K: Sending people up the mountain is always a good bet. If it's a longer visit, I'd bring people to the estacade. Historically I'd always want to bring people to Fattal because it's an important experience.

F: Always suggest good restaurants — ideally that buddies are working at.

Is it better to have a bad set at home or on the road? Or do you guys prefer not to perform poorly at all?

K: We had a rough set in Toronto last weekend but Felix made up for it by tackling Alex to the ground and that's mostly what the people remember. And I think there's a good lesson there? I think?

DJBP: SHAME is the kind of record title that's so immediately effective it could function as a single–word summary. Does that title indicate a through–line? Is SHAME a noun or a verb or both in the case of this project?

A: Both. This is music for perverts.

DJBP: In contrast, SHAME also bears a handful of pretty benign song titles in its track listing with oddball headscratchers like "cow/boy," "jack offman," "coldplay," and "boymode." At least a couple of these feel like they could have derived from inside jokes. How far does the humour extend from titles to lyricism if at all?

A: I think "jack offman" might be the only funny song lyrically but it's also like about some guy jacking off, which sometimes is deeply unfunny (see Louis C.K.). "Chemical 2.0" was also a funny one about goblins and piss but we never re recorded and the song has hit the graveyard.

K: I'm pretty sure half the titles happen before the lyrics are written. Maybe we've gotten away from that somewhat but maybe all the songs on the first demo were "named" before the lyrics existed. But I'm not a lyrics guy.

H: I'd say on average the titles are often more playful than the actual songs... Some of the titles have nothing to do with the actual lyrics, we just like the way the word sounds.

DJBP: I guess this is a bit of a leading question, but are the jokey or not–so–serious titles a way to make songs with heavier lyrics more approachable on the surface?

A: Yeah: most of the songs (at least the ones I've written) are coming from a pretty painful place. I would hope people are not trying to make sense of what I'm saying. Maybe I'll get more cryptic and feel comfortable releasing them but for now just silly titles.

DJBP: It's good to be well–humoured as a band. Do you guys like to laugh and smile?

A: :0)

F: I like to laugh — I like to have fun too.

H: We love to laugh, live and love 👉👈